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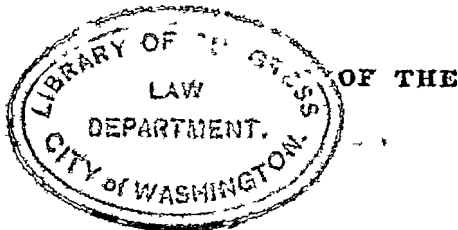
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MESSAGE

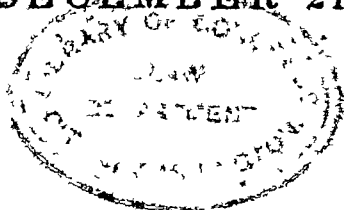
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

*Fellow-Citizens of the Senate
and House of Representatives.*

IN the remarks which I had the honor to make on my induction to office, I promised to present at an early period, some of the leading topics which would require our united consideration. As yet, I am not prepared to discharge this duty with entire satisfaction to myself, in consequence of the limited time I have had for that examination and reflection, which are so essential to a perfect analysis of the varied subjects which the present condition of our country suggests; but as far as my means of information will, at this time permit, I beg leave to lay before the Honorable Congress, and through it, to the Nation at large, the result of the hasty deliberations which I have been able to bestow on a few of the more important subjects connected with the general welfare.

The achievement of a peoples independence from the domination of an unjust and vacillating Government, is an event, which will always attract the warmest sympathies of the friends of human liberty throughout the world. Our efforts in the great enterprise have been accompanied by the kindest feelings of millions, who were alien to our contest, and to any direct interest in its issue; and if it were needful to superadd any thing to the promptings of self interest, the dictates of honor, and the suggestion of a fervid and enlightened patriotism, as an incentive on our part to further and continued exertions in the cause of free government; we should find it in that generous and wide spread sympathy which has been expressed in our behalf; and in the exalted hopes of good which have been raised upon our struggle by the virtuous and the wise of mankind. Let us then gentlemen, endeavor to realize and appreciate the weighty responsibilities which rest upon us; and by a vigorous and persevering discharge of our respective duties, shew that we are worthy of the

sympathies bestowed, and can give fruition to the hopes excited.— Let us maintain our sovereignty, preserve concord at home; faithfully observe all national obligations; and transmit to posterity the free institutions we have erected, unimpaired by selfishness, and untouched by vain and pernicious ambition.

The few days which have elapsed since I have been charged with the Executive duties of the Government, have not enabled me to become familiar with all the matters proper to be presented to your consideration in a formal message. Of the actual condition of our exterior affairs, I can only speak in general terms. Our immediate relations with foreign powers, are necessarily circumscribed. The newness of our political existence, will, for some time to come, cause them to be brief and simple, and it will be wise in us to preserve their simplicity as far as practicable, while we endeavor by all means compatible with national dignity, to extend their limits. The Government of the United States, always foremost in whatever tends to the advancement of liberty, continues to manifest towards us, the same just and magnanimous spirit which prompted the early recognition of our Independence; and I entertain a profound hope, that other leading powers will shortly see the propriety of extending to us, and acquiring for themselves, the advantages of international fellowship. To Great Britain the Independence of Texas cannot be an indifferent event. The advancement of her great manufacturing and commercial interests, is too deeply identified with our future prosperity as a nation, to permit us to believe, that she can view our present position with other than favorable regard. To France also, it presents inducements, which cannot fail to elicit that chivalrous liberality, which has heretofore so conspicuously characterized her National Councils. With Mexico, our posture is unchanged.—She still seems to cherish the illusory hope of conquest, without adopting any means for its realization. A final abandonment of such hopes, or a more vigorous prosecution of the measures which would at once determine their worth, would be more consonant to true glory and wisdom, than this attitude of supine and sullen hostility. It may become the duty and interest of Texas, to reduce the question of her right to Independence, to a more summary adjustment than our adversary seems inclined to give it. While we would meet with alacrity, the first indication of a desire, for a just and honorable peace, we should compel a more active prosecution of the war. If peace can be obtained only by the sword, let the sword do its work.

If we desire to establish a Republican Government upon a broad and permanent basis, it will become our duty to adopt a comprehensive and well regulated system of mental and moral culture. Education is a subject in which every Citizen, and especially every parent, feels a deep and lively concern. It is one in which no jarring interests are involved, and no accriminious political feelings, excited; for its benefits are so universal that all parties can cordially unite in advancing it. It is admitted by all, that cultivated mind is the guardian genius of Democracy, and while guided and controlled by virtue, the noblest attribute of man. It is the only dictator that freemen acknowledge, and the only security which freemen desire. The influence of Education in the moral world, is like light in the physical; rendering luminous, what before was obscure. It opens a wide field for the exercise and improvement of all the faculties of man, and imparts vigor and clearness to those important truths in the science of Government, as well as of morals, which would otherwise be lost in the darkness of ignorance. Without its aid, how perilous and insufficient would be the deliberations of a Government like ours? How ignoble and useless its legislation for all the purposes of happiness? How fragile and insecure its liberties? War would be conducted without the science necessary to insure success, and its bitterness and calamities would be unrelieved by the ameliorating circumstances which the improved condition of man has imparted to it; and peace would be joyless, because its train would be unattended by that civilization and refinement which can alone give zest to social and domestic enjoyments.— And how shall we protect our rights if we do not comprehend them? And can we comprehend them unless we acquire a knowledge of the past and present condition of things, and practice the habit of enlightened reflection? Cultivation is as necessary to the supply of rich intellectual and moral fruits, as are the labors of the husbandman to bring forth the valuable productions of the earth. But it would be superfluous to offer to this Honorable Congress any extended argument to enforce the practical importance of this subject. I feel fully assured that it will, in that liberal spirit of improvement which pervades the social world, lose not the present auspicious opportunity to provide for literary institutions, with a munificence, commensurate with our future destinies. To patronise the general diffusion of knowledge, industry, and charity, has been near the hearts of the good and wise of all nations; while the ambitious, and the ignorant would fain have thwarted a policy so pure and laudable. But

the rich domes and spires of edifices, consecrated to these objects, which are continually increasing in numbers, throwing their scenic splendor over civilization, and attesting the patriotism of their founders shew that this unhallowed purpose has not been accomplished. Our young Republic has been formed by a Spartan Spirit—let it progress and ripen into Roman firmness, and Athenian gracefulness and wisdom. Let those names which have been inscribed on the standard of her martial glory, be found also on the page of her history, associated with that profound and enlightened policy, which is to make our country a bright link in that chain of free States, which will some day encircle, and unite in harmony, the American Continent. Thus, and thus only, will true glory be perfected; and our nation which has sprung from the harsh trump of war, be matured into the refinements, and the tranquil happiness of peace. Let me therefore urge it upon you, Gentlemen, not to postpone this matter too long. The present is a propitious moment, to lay the foundation of a great moral, and intellectual edifice, which will in after ages be hailed as the chief ornament and blessing of Texas. A suitable appropriation of lands to the purpose of general Education can be made at this time without inconvenience, to the Government, or the people, but defer it until the public domain shall have passed from our hands, and the uneducated youths of Texas, will constitute the living monuments of our neglect and remissness. To commence a liberal system of instruction a few years hence may be attended with many difficulties. The imposition of taxes will be necessary; sectional jealousies will spring up; and the whole plan may be defeated in the conflict of selfishness, or be suffered to languish under a feeble and inefficient support. A liberal endowment which will be adequate to the general diffusion of a good rudimental education in every district of the Republic, and to the establishment of a University where the highest branches of science may be taught, can now be effected without the expenditure of a single dollar—postpone it a few years, and millions will be necessary to accomplish the great design.

I must also invite the attention of Congress to the defects of the Municipal Code. Unfortunately for the Country, we have now in force many portions of two systems different in their origin, discordant in their provisions and calculated to lead to the most conflicting decisions. Of the cases that present themselves before the courts many are included in neither Code, many are differently provided for by both, leaving the parties without remedy in the first instance, and often wholly uncertain as to the

proper remedy in the second. Nor are these the most prominent objections against our present system. The sages of the law, have long since determined it, to be no less important to a community, that the laws should be certain, and the decisions of the courts uniform than that the principles upon which they are based, should be wise and equitable. While such as are now in force in this government remain unaltered, it may easily be perceived that our judicial decisions must be more irreconcilable than those of any other civilized country upon the globe. Mankind are so constituted that when placed under similar circumstances they look through different mediums at the same object.— This is nowhere made more apparent than by a reference to the records of judicial decisions. We there learn that in the most enlightened nations where the laws were originally framed with the utmost precision, that human wisdom and sagacity could devise—where there have been no jarring regulations unskillfully blended, but where one uniform system has been ripened, and improved by the prescience of successive ages, the votaries of the science have differed so widely in their interpretations, as to produce the most disastrous consequences to the community at large, and if such results follow the most favorable circumstances which the ingenuity of man could suggest, much more unfortunate must be the fate of Texas, if left to struggle with her present over-powering difficulties. The admirers of the civil Law will regard its rules, as based upon the principles of equity, and will look to it, as the most correct standard by which their decisions can be made, while the advocates of the Common Law will regard its more certain, rigid and inflexible rules, as far better adapted to the genius of our people, and to the situation and circumstances of our country. Thus it may not unfrequently occur, that upon the same question of law, we shall have the most conflicting judicial decisions throughout the Republic. The judicial annals of the civilized world most clearly show that the uncertainty of the law has invariably given rise to endless litigation, more blighting to the prosperity and happiness of a country than any other calamity whatever. We are the only people who have adopted a system of laws of which the great body of the community are entirely ignorant. It would be a task of extreme difficulty for the most learned in the science even to enumerate the various Mexican authorities now in force in this Government. Most of these authorities have never yet been imported into the country, and with a few exceptions they are written in a foreign language unknown to our people; and to a large ma-

jority of the profession as well as to a majority of the legal tribunals appointed by Congress to interpret and administer them. Nor is there a reasonable hope, that at an early period we can be relieved from this painful perplexity; for it would be entirely impracticable for the government to procure at this time, the translation, publication, and general distribution of these authorities.— And until this is done, or the system changed, we shall be doomed to the painful necessity of having the titles to our property tried, and all our contracts interpreted by laws unknown to our Courts, and unknown to the community. But while the present situation of Texas in this particular must be a source of deep regret to her friends they can nevertheless console themselves by the reflection that the Constitution of the Country has provided a salutary remedy, by which she may be extricated from the difficulty. Congress is required by that sacred instrument at a period as early as practicable to introduce by statute the common Law of England with such modifications as the circumstances of the country may in their judgement require. The period here contemplated by the Constitution in the opinion of the Executive has now arrived; and the speedy execution of this provision it is respectfully believed will save our country from much public disaster and individual ruin. By adopting the common Law we do but avail ourselves, as in every science, of the labors and experience of all those generations who have gone before us. We shall exercise the exalted privilege of appropriating and enjoying the benefits of a liberal jurisprudence originated by the wisdom, and for centuries defended by the valor of the Anglo-Saxon race. We shall be adopting a system called into being, not by the Sovereign will of some arbitrary despot, but one originating in the general habits of a nation of free and independent Citizens, associated by their genius and their customs and connected by the ties of a common language and a common ancestry, a system which has invariably inspired its votaries with an ardent desire to transmit unimpaired to their posterity, those natural rights which they received from the great author of their being, and those political privileges secured to them by the Constitution of their country; a system upon which the lights of experience and the rays of science have been concentrating for centuries past, to which the immortal Sages of the profession have in each successive age devoted lives of the most arduous and unremitting toil, and which has become so improved, refined, and expanded, as to be admirably adapted to all the complicated relations of society in Great Britain, and

the United States, two of the most liberal and enlightened nations of the world where the rigid rules enacted for the prevention and punishment of crime, have been so mellowed and softened by the principles of Divine Revelation, that it is now justly regarded as the perfection of human reason and the most moderate and consistent of every earthly code. In making the proposed alteration I would also suggest the propriety of formally adopting a few of the general statutes of some State of established legal reputation and domestic institutions similar to our own; and furthermore that a committee of professional Gentlemen be appointed to arrange a system by compilation, or digest of statutes, adapted to our wants, to be submitted to the consideration of the next National Congress.

But among the many subjects that unite the solemn and deliberate attention of the Congress of Texas at this moment, no one involves a more affecting interest, than the exposed and defenceless condition of our inland frontier. Since the memorable victory of San Jacinto, we have sustained but little annoyance from our principal enemy. Their spirits were daunted and their energies paralyzed by that signal defeat; and from that period they have been occupied with domestic disturbances, or difficulties growing out of their foreign relations. These causes of inaction on their part may be temporary, and we ought by no means to permit them to beguile us into negligence. But, while the Mexican government has been restrained from renewing any serious attempt upon our liberties, our western frontier has been polluted and our Citizens disquieted by small parties of Mexican brigands, who war for spoil and invade only to ravage and destroy. To chastise these depredators and suppress their incursions, is due to the honor and the tranquility of the nation. I would therefore recommend that a law be enacted which shall visit a just and severe retribution upon such Mexican citizens, not in the actual service of their government, as shall be found in arms, or convicted of any hostile practices within our territory. An honorable warfare we will reciprocate. But the predatory aggressions of unauthorized banditti, have always received, as they justly merit, the severest chastisements that an indignant community can inflict.

Unhappily our frontier is suffering greater evils than result from these occasional and desultory incursions. Several native tribes of Indians, deriving confidence from our forbearance, have waged, and are waging, a petty, but in some instances, a disastrous and cruel warfare upon our neglected border settlements.

The importance of chastising these savage offenders, and extending protection to our exposed and suffering fellow-citizens, cannot fail to attract your early and most serious notice—Honor, humanity, and patriotism, conspire to enjoin this duty upon us. It is a cardinal principle in all political associations, that protection is commensurate with allegiance, and the poorest citizen whose sequestered cabin is reared on our remotest frontier, holds as sacred a claim upon the government for safety and security as does the man who lives in ease and wealth in the heart of our most populous city. I am by no means desirous of aggravating the ordinary and inevitable calamities of war, by inculcating the harsh doctrine of the *lex talionis* toward the debased and ignorant savages. War is in itself an evil, which all good people will strive to avoid; but when it cannot be avoided, it ought to be so met and pursued as will best secure a speedy and lasting peace. If that better mode consists in severity to the enemy, then severity to him, becomes clemency to all. The moderation hitherto extended to the Indians on our borders has been repeatedly retorted upon us, in all the atrocious cruelties that characterize their modes of warfare. The Indian Warrior in his heartless and sanguinary vengeance recognises no distinction of age or sex or condition. All are indiscriminate victims to his cruelties. The wife and the infant afford as rich a trophy to the *scalping Knife*, as the warrior who falls in the vigor of manhood and the pride of his chivalry. And why is it, that he is thus so insensible to the dictates of justice and humanity? Has not the white man for centuries furnished him examples of clemency and kindness? Have not their women and children been protected, and the old and the infirm been spared? And when taken in battle, have they not experienced the forbearances and indulgences which so much assuage the asperities of civilized conflict?—They have; and it is precisely because these indulgences have been profitable to their heartless policy that they have persevered in their ancient barbarities. As long as we continue to exhibit our mercy without shewing our strength so long will the Indian continue to bloody the edge of the tomahawk, and move onward in the work of rapacity and slaughter. And how long shall this cruel humanity, this murderous sensibility for the sanguinary savage be practised in defiance of its tested impolicy? Until other oceans of blood; the blood of our wives and children, shall glut their voracious appetite? I would answer no. If the wild cannibals of the woods will not desist from their massacres; if they will continue to war upon us with the ferocity of Tigers and Hyen-

has, it is time that we should retaliate their warfare, not in the murder of their women and children, but in the prosecution of an exterminating war upon their warriors which will admit of no compromise and have no termination except in their total extinction, or total expulsion.)

I am not informed of all the circumstances connected with the recent disturbances in the East. Neither do I know precisely, the origin of these difficulties. It is thought by some, that the Indians have been encroached upon in the enjoyment of their landed rights. I am not aware of the fact myself. If the spirit of speculative enterprize has been pushed by any of our citizens beyond the boundaries of prudence; and has awakened the savages to a war upon our whole community, it is certainly a matter to be much regretted; but being involved, it becomes the nation to meet the exigencies with promptitude and energy. But I am far from conceding that the Indians, either Native, or Emigrant, have any just cause of complaint. That the Emigrant Tribes have no legal or equitable claim to any portion of our territory is obvious, from a cursory examination of their history. Their emigration to Texas was unsolicited and unauthorized; and has always been a source of regret to its more enlightened population. The federal government of Mexico; neither conceded, nor promised them lands, or civil rights. They came as intruders; were positively forbid to make any permanent abidance; and have continued in the country up to the present period against the public wish and at the sacrifice of the public tranquility. This is particularly the case with the Cherokees. The offer made to bordering Indians in the colonization law of Coahuila and Texas, carries with it precedent conditions which have in no instance been complied with by any one of these tribes. To the Mexican authorities of that state, they were objects of disquietude and terror; and if in any instance a promise of lands was made to their Chiefs or Headmen, they were either induced by fear, or proceeded from a design to array the tomahawk and scalping knife against the American settlers of Texas. Such promises (if ever made) under such circumstances can impose no moral obligations on us. But the pledge by the Consultation of Texas in 1835, and the treaty consequent upon it, are said to be regarded by the Indians and their advocates as the chief foundation of the claims which they set up for lands in Texas. It is not necessary to inquire into the nature and extent of the powers which originated and negotiated that treaty; for the treaty itself never was ratified by any competent authority,

and therefore can in nowise be legally considered as binding or obligatory upon us. Had it been ratified however, by all the solemnities of the constitution, still this government is now wholly absolved from the performance of its conditions, by the notorious and habitual violation of its principal stipulations by the Indians. Should it be urged that a moral obligation is imposed upon us still, to extend to them the benefits of the treaty notwithstanding their repeated violation of its provisions, in consequence of their supposed ignorance in such affairs—I would reply that all moral obligation presupposes reciprocity; and if the good faith of this government is pledged to convey a large and valuable portion of its territory, situated in the very centre of its empire to these Emigrant bands, then they stand morally bound to render full allegiance to the government of Texas, to respect and obey its laws, and to support and defend its constitution. That this has not been done by them is certain; and that it will not be done is more than probable. To admit their claim to any extent, on any other conditions would entail interminable vexations on our posterity. It would be parcelling out our territory to strangers and intruders, and introducing into the very viscera of the body politic, an alien, independent and innately hostile people, who know no restraints of law, and are subordinate to no authority. It would not only establish the monstrous political anomaly of an absolute *imperium in imperio*; but what is still more abhorrent, a lawless and intractable power, within an organized enlightened and sovereign Government. At some future period, I may do myself the honor to lay before the congress, some of the interesting and important facts connected with this subject; and in the mean time in consideration of the embarrassments which surround our relations to these Indians, I would respectfully offer the following suggestions: That there be established as early as practicable a line of military posts, competent to the protection of our frontier from the incursions of the wandering tribes that infest our borders; and that all intercourse between them and our citizens, be made under the eye, and subject to the control of the Government. In order to allay the apprehensions of the friendly tribes, and prevent any collision between them and our own citizens, I would recommend that each Indian family be permitted to enjoy such improvements as they occupy, together with a suitable portion of land, without interruption or annoyance, so long as they choose to remain upon it, and shall deport themselves in a friendly manner; being subordinate to our laws in all criminal matters, and in matters

of contract, to the authorized agents of the Government. To this end the appointment of suitable agents to reside among the located tribes would be necessary, whose duty it should be, to keep up a vigilant espionage, cultivate friendly relations, and as far as practicable, prevent all causes of interruption and collision between the Indians and our own people. Commissioners might be appointed to make treaties to this effect, with such tribes as are disposed to peace and friendship, while those who reject the terms should be viewed as enemies, and treated accordingly. These gratuitous and liberal concessions, on our part are perhaps due to the regard which we all entertain for peace. If unhappily they shall be found inadequate to secure that desirable object; and the Indians shall persist in their extravagant demands and resolve upon war, then let them feel that there are terrors also in the enmity of the white man, and that the blood of our wives and children cannot be shed without a righteous retribution.

My great solicitude on the subject of frontier protection has partially overruled the repugnance I have always felt for standing armies. In the present disturbed condition of our foreign and Indian relations, the proper security of the country at large, and especially the peace and safety of our border settlements, seem imperatively to require the immediate organization of a regular, permanent, and efficient force. The magnitude of that force must vary with circumstances; but until we shall have obtained a full acknowledgment of our Independence, and shall have either by treaties or chastisement secured our exposed fellow citizens from Indian aggression or the apprehension of hostilities, I should suppose that, that force could not, compatible with safety, be either small or inactive. Such a force when properly and judiciously disposed of, would deter the Indian from his depredations—inspire a confidence which would lead to a rapid settlement of our present frontier, and at the same time form a nucleus around which the chivalric yeomanry of the land would rally in the event of another invasion from our national foe. In recommending this measure I am not insensible to the burthens which the equipment and the maintenance of a competent force must necessarily impose upon the people; but a people who value their liberty and safety above all price, will consider every burthen light which is necessary to the maintenance of their national character and independence. Neither am I unapprized of the very serious objections which have prevailed, generally in Republican governments, to this description of force. That a large standing army, led by an artful and unprincipled

commander, may be rendered dangerous to the liberties of the people who have created and sustained it, is a truth authenticated by many precedents. But I trust that the people of Texas are now too strong, too vigilant, and too jealous of their civil rights, ever to permit an ambitious chieftain to set at naught the legitimate authorities of the country. "That the military shall in all cases and at all times be subordinate to the civil power" is a wise precept of our constitution, which it is our duty to guard with sedulous care, and to transmit inviolate to our successors. Free governments have always found their best defence against foreign and domestic enemies in the patriotism, the intelligence and the chivalry of the great body of the people. A well regulated militia is the strongest and the surest bulwark of liberty. It will therefore constitute a favorite point of policy in my administration, (if I am sustained by the legislative wisdom of the country), to foster a spirit of military pride and emulation among the people. For this purpose I shall feel it my duty to encourage volunteer associations, their country's ornament in peace, and her safety in war; and to adopt such a system of organization and discipline for the general militia as will qualify them for active and efficient operations, should the exigencies of the country require their services in the field. While recommending the organization of a sufficient regular force to insure the present protection of the republic from temporary aggressions without calling the people from their various pursuits of industry, I would still prefer, in the hour which tries men's souls, to rest the nation's defence, upon the zeal, the valor, and the patriotism of the citizen soldier.

I regret that I am obliged to remark that our Navy has suffered an entire prostration. It is less interesting to inquire into the causes which have produced this misfortune than to devise and apply a remedy for it. From the time the adventurous Columbus traversed the Atlantic, the commercial intercourse of nations has been evidently increasing, and it now constitutes one of the most important and complicate branches of national policy. The protection of that commerce by the nation whose geographical position enables it to enjoy the benefits of a foreign trade, is fully as requisite to the common welfare, as the protection of any other department of its concerns. Texas is happily situated in this respect, and can never reach the acme of her greatness until a well cherished commerce shall aid her agricultural faculties, by distributing the surplus products of her soil to other nations. This distribution can be affected only by a suitable marine

power; for unless commerce be protected from insult and depredation on the high seas, agriculture with all its concomitant interests will languish in its unprofitable abundance. To re-establish our navy on a respectable footing, is therefore of primary importance; and we cannot better serve our country, than by devoting a portion of her means to this purpose. Should the blockade of the Mexican ports by the Navy of France, be raised (and there is no assurance that it will not shortly be) the ships of war of our enemy would again appear on our coast and annoy our commerce. The protection of our maritime frontier, is as much a public duty, although not urged upon us by the same affecting considerations at this particular juncture, as is that of the interior. This duty may be effectually accomplished by a naval force of small magnitude, though, under the present condition of our credit and finances, not at a moderate expense. Its importance however is too great to be longer neglected; and I shall feel it my duty to offer to Congress some further reflections on the subject in a special message which I design to lay before that Honorable body.

As connected with the national defence, the finances will merit and receive your early attention. I have not had time, since my entrance into office, to ascertain minutely, the condition of our fiscal affairs. That they will require improvement is without doubt. Money has been emphatically styled the sinew of war; and certain it is, that a people cannot be defended, nor a government sustained, without it. The modes of acquiring this indispensable aid, are various in proportion as the resources of a country are manifold. The abundant intrinsic wealth of Texas is yet in the matrix of nature. Time, population, industry and enterprise, are necessary to their full developement. Time is not staid, and the adjuncts are fast flowing to us. In a few years, when agricultural exports shall exceed in value all that the most sumptuous extravagance can desire from abroad, and our unexplored minerals shall be in process of extraction, the people of Texas will find no difficulty in rendering ample means of support to their government, and protection to themselves. But at present, those important ends are not to be accomplished by direct contribution, without some painful exertions, and sacrifices of personal convenience. To levy burdensome taxes on a people, many of whose farms and dwellings have been recently abandoned, and made desolate by an invading enemy, and who are still laboring under the embarrassments incident to a new settlement, and who are yet struggling for political exist-

ence, has an aspect of severity and injustice, and ought by all possible means to be avoided. The only practical mode of doing this, is to anticipate the future abundant resources of the country, and to devolve upon our posterity, a portion of the burdens to which the perfecting our independence and theirs has subjected, and is still subjecting us. The equity of this recourse to posterity will not rightfully be disputed by them, and cannot be controverted by us.

The practicability of negotiating a loan adequate to the wants of the country, seems to be somewhat problematical. But I do not despair of being able to effect it, if the congress will make satisfactory provisions for its ultimate redemption, and the prompt payment of the interest that may accrue upon it. That Texas can render a full, and to all human prescience, a certain and indistructible guarantee for any pecuniary liabilities which she would incur, there can be no doubt in the minds of those who are familiar with her condition and her inherent resources. But foreign capitalists are not presumed to be intimately acquainted with these things, and hence will result the necessity of presenting to them some more than ordinary inducements, before we can reasonably expect to acquire their confidence and credit. I trust that the honorable Congress will so arrange this important matter, that the Executive will make a speedy and effectual effort to obtain what all feel to be so important to the country—a competent loan.

Much may be done towards establishing a financial credit abroad, by a wise, liberal, and effective system of legislation. So long as the resources of a country are permitted to lie dormant and intangible, without an effort on the part of the Government to bring them into activity, their intrinsic value, and positive abundance, are comparatively of little import. Laws tending to encourage agriculture, to foster commerce, to withdraw the rich minerals imbedded in the earth, will always exert a salutary influence on the national character and credit abroad, beside the many blessings they dispense at home. The far interior of our country abounds in mineral wealth. Not to secure that wealth from individual appropriation, would be a lamentable oversight; and to suffer such treasures to avail us nothing in our highest need, would be equally unwise and improvident. Hence, I would urge the passage of a general law, (if such do not already exist,) reserving to the Republic all minerals of whatever description; and at the same time would respectfully suggest the policy of adopting suitable measures by which we may turn them to

our early advantage. It is apparent to my mind, that the government, by a wise code of laws, especially applicable to mining, aided by the combined powers and active enterprise of corporate companies, could more effectually and rapidly bring these hidden treasures into use, than the desultory, fickle and comparatively limited efforts of individual proprietors would be apt to do. If the government should not find it convenient at present to unite and co-operate with such companies, she would, in all probability, experience no difficulty in predicating a foreign loan commensurate with her exigencies on the privileges (properly restricted,) which she would be able to extend to energetic and enlightened capitalists.

Notwithstanding my decided aversion to an onerous system of taxation, I am precluded by the actual necessities of the government from advising any abatement in the present rates; for I apprehend that the revenue as now realized, is scarcely sufficient to defray the current expenses. The increased expenditures which must result from the necessity of defending our frontiers will render it absolutely necessary that the tax on land if not augmented should at least be more equally and uniformly assessed. Under the operation of the present law, and in the present inchoate condition of the major part of the land titles in the country, but a very small portion of the lands owned by individuals, is liable to taxation. This obvious injustice, results from the fact, that it has heretofore been thought unadvisable to issue patents to claimants of headrights, or to those entitled to bounty lands. The cause is properly removeable by direct and pertinent legislative action. To issue patents in all cases (and it would be impossible for the executive to discriminate) without enquiring into the many frauds which are alledged to have been practised before the board of commissioners, seems to be fraught with objections, and to withhold deeds from those justly entitled to them, is plainly inconsistent with the frankness which a government should always manifest towards its citizens. It is therefore highly expedient that something definite be done in order that patents may issue in all cases; or that some suitable measure be devised and carried into effect, by which the supposed impositions may be detected, and the rights of the country vindicated. Until the question is finally adjusted, the government is deprived of the revenue which she so much needs, and which would be raised from her alienated lands. Whatever the congress may think proper to order, this department will execute without delay. The great object of taxes being to sustain the

government in its useful and necessary action, will suggest to the wisdom of congress the importance of one plain system being adopted. It occurs to the executive that this system should be both simple, and coercive in its character; that the money may be certainly had at fixed periods, to meet the wants and expenditures of the government.

Besides other sources of revenue, I would invite the congress to the continuance of the tariff laws, with such alterations as reflection and experience may suggest. The decided bias of my mind is for the total abolition of all duties on imports, not only because it would comport with that freedom of commerce so closely connected with the fundamental rights of man, but because it would be peculiarly adapted to the future condition and policy of Texas. Apprised of the imposing authority by which the system has been maintained and enforced, as well as of the fact, that some nations owe their wealth and public position to an able adjustment of it, I have approached the subject with a becoming caution, and have bestowed upon it that responsible reflection to which it is entitled. While I am aware, that by indirect taxation in the nature of a tariff, the people bear the burthen as consumers without scarcely perceiving it, and are exonerated from that general surveillance, and odious inquisition, with which the visits of assessors, and collectors, of direct taxation are accompanied; and while I am equally aware of the derogatory and dangerous influence which an ambitious executive may be able to bring to bear upon the people through the swarms of dependent officers, continually residing and acting among them, yet still, I look forward to a period, (I hope near at hand) when we shall be able, and will find it to be our interest, to invite the commerce of the world to our free and open ports. This, however, from considerations of a high public policy, may not be done until our national independence shall be generally acknowledged. The radical policy of Texas is anti-tariff, because its commercial commodities are of the raw material, which fears no impost rivalry, and paying no contributions to manufactories. Yet the immediate adoption of free trade, as is proposed by many of our citizens and statesmen, would in the present situation of our country, exhibit an apparent recklessness and imprudence, which could not fail to affect our credit abroad; for it should never be forgotten, that fickleness and instability in a young government like ours, is as destructive to its character, as a vitiated currency is to its wealth, or oppression to its peace. In addition to this, it should be borne in mind, that the revenue collected through

custom houses has been, and is still our chief dependence for sustaining the credit of our public issues, which must most certainly sink into a disastrous and degrading depreciation with the repeal of the imposts. Indeed if we abolish the tariff in the present impoverished condition of the treasury, the government will be left destitute of the means of sustaining itself, during the interval of collecting the necessary fund by direct taxation, or raising it on foreign loans, which, in either case, under the most favorable circumstances, will require several months to effect; and this destitution of means, will occur at a moment, when the energies of the government are demanded for frontier defence. Under these circumstances I feel constrained to ask of the honorable congress a continuance of the tariff to meet the exigencies of the times, until other sources of wealth, and revenue, shall be opened for supplying the treasury, and defraying the necessary expenses of the government.

There is no one subject in the whole range of political economy that carries with it a more universal and intense interest, than that of the circulating medium, and none is more worthy the immediate and profound attention of congress. The necessity of adopting some practical mode of supplying the general demand for money, which will combine convenience with security, is felt every where, and by all classes. The insufficiency of the present means is too obvious to be longer relied upon. As a temporary expedient, it has answered a valuable purpose; but experience already admonishes us, that to urge it further, or to continue it longer, would be equally injudicious and prejudicial. If the unavailing efforts of England, France and the United States, to give confidence and a uniform circulation to inconvertible paper as the representative of money, were not sufficient evidence of its impracticability; the present depreciation of our own promissory notes, gives a testimony that is calculated to force conviction upon the judgment of every citizen. The exchequer bills of England, the assignats of France, and the treasury bills of the United States, furnish memorable examples of the inability of the most powerful and opulent governments, to establish a good practical circulating medium on their own credit alone, without the facilities of prompt redemption. The precious metals are the only uniform standard of value; and no paper representative can acquire general confidence, and answer the legitimate purposes of trade, unless it be convertible at the pleasure of the holder into gold or silver; for there are occasions constantly arising in the fluctuations of business, when nothing else

than specie, or its actual convertible representative will satisfy the demands, or supply the absolute necessities of creditors.

To remedy the many inconveniences incident to a cumbersome metallic currency and to furnish greater facilities to operations in money, banks have been incorporated in all countries where commerce has flourished, or agriculture has prospered beyond the immediate wants of a simple predial existence. The experiment of banking has been fully tested by experience, and the almost universal adoption of the expedient affords abundant and incontrovertible evidence of its general utility and adaptation to the wants and convenience of men. But great diversity of opinion exists in regard to the various modes of creating and organizing and managing such institutions. To my mind, the objections to private incorporated banks far transcend in practical importance any useful purposes they may have, or are likely to fulfil. In respect to them, our experience is large, full and direct. That many of them have been extensively beneficial, is without doubt; that in general they have been productive of more evil than good, and have exerted a pernicious influence on society, is no less clear. The examples furnished in the United States, are within the recollection of every citizen, and they address their monitory voice with peculiar force to our judgment. There, among a kindred people, incorporated banking companies have been created, endowed and cherished in every variety of form and modification of structure. In the early stages of their operations, the system was warmly commended to the people at large, by the additional capital which it seemed to create, and the consequent impetus it gave to all kinds of business. Industry and enterprise in all the vocations of life derived new vigor and encouragement from the abundant facilities which the free circulation and easy access of a professedly redeemable bank paper presented to them; and the nation sprang forward in prosperity amidst the general jubilee of individual excitation. But in process of time, as the banks multiplied in numbers, and their paper spread over the land, expelling every dollar of specie from circulation, the flattering scene changed, and a paralyzing revulsion ensued. The factitious substitutes for money proved in many instances inconvertible, and not unfrequently, fraudulent and worthless. The issues of the best and soundest banks, depreciated a short distance from their own locality; the entire currency of the country lost the public confidence, and universal embarrassment and wide spread ruin succeeded. The first considerable revolution in the monetary system gave rise to a strict

scrutiny into the nature and capacities of banks ; and it was soon discovered that private incorporations were essentially unsuitable ; liable to be influenced by the vile artifices of corrupt speculators, and were altogether inadequate to supply the general wants of the community. That however sound may be their basis, and wise their management, they can never inspire and sustain a universal confidence, nor secure a remote and uniform currency to their issues. That their credit being local, the benefits they conferred were necessarily limited. To correct these disabilities by increasing the number of the local banks, would be extending the countless evils incident to such institutions, without effecting a remedy, or attaining the great object in view ; for in the same ratio as the banks increased in number, the par circulation of their bills diminished in distance ; and the difficulties of commercial exchanges became the more vexatious and burdensome. The utmost capabilities of private incorporated banks were ascertained to be defective and utterly incompetent to supply the wants of the country. For the great desideratum in domestic finances, is a sound and uniform currency, which shall pervade the whole body politic, even as in physics, vital blood pervades the human system.

These practical developments, conspiring with the many radical, imposing and popular objections to all private banking incorporations in that country, turned the attention of her ablest statesmen to a national institution, as the only effectual means of attaining safety, uniformity, and free circulation throughout the Republic—the legitimate ends of a representative paper currency. Accordingly, at the commencement of the last war between the United States and Great Britain, a National Bank was established ; and its powerful efficacy was soon manifested in the restoration of a sound and redeemable paper currency, and the revival of general confidence. The difficulties that had involved the whole commercial population, and those dependent upon it, in frequent and distressing bankruptcy, were rapidly dissipated and forgotten ; and the country was blessed to an extraordinary extent, with a safe and convenient medium of exchange between the remotest parts of its territory, and even between them and the leading commercial nations of the world. New hopes and activity were infused into every department of business.—The farmer, the mechanic, the merchant, and those of the learned professions, all experienced its renovating and salutary influence. And the government itself, not only participated in these aggregate benefits, but found in the bank a fiscal agent, adequate

to all its financial exigencies. The minor and local banks were brought under a wholesome restraint, and compelled to confine their issues within their appropriate spheres. Such of them as were insolvent from adversity or mismanagement, withdrew from the hopeless competition; and those which had originated in fraud and corrupt speculation, were detected, exposed, and in most cases arrested in their course of iniquity and imposture. The temporary embarrassments which resulted from the contraction, the withdrawal, or the insolvent dissolution of the local banks were speedily repaired; and the partial derangements in business were restored and succeeded by a wholesome and universal circulation of a uniform, sound, and easily convertible currency, which was passed and received with unhesitating confidence.

With the recent overthrow of the Bank of the United States we, as a distinct people, have nothing to do, and should forbear to pass any stricture upon it. Our political organization is essentially different from theirs, and exempts us from many abstruse and harrassing questions of internal policy, which have seriously vexed, and too sensibly attenuated the bands of that illustrious union. Our government is one and integral; and admits of no exciting conflicts of state rights and federal powers. It acts upon and controls the domestic and minute internal policy, as well as the general and foreign relations of the country, and can never be rightfully contravened or annulled in the exercise of its functions, except as it may impair, abuse, or neglect the general interests, or violate the inherent and reserved rights of individuals. To Texas, a National Bank, properly constituted, would sustain very different, and much more simple relations, than it could do, by any ingenuity in its conformation under that grand, but complex system of government. And as its relations to the country would be more simple, and less exposed to perversion or to cavil, so its operations would naturally be more uniform, harmonious, and beneficial.

In contemplation of these and many other reasons which might be added, I feel it my duty to recommend to you the early establishment of a strictly national Bank, which shall be the exclusive property, and under the exclusive control of the republic. An admixture of private interests would embarrass its operations, without bringing equivalent advantages to the institution. Such a bank incorporated for a suitable term of years, founded on a specific hypothecation of a competent portion of the public domain, which should be immediately appropriated to that purpose; with

the additional guarantee of the plighted faith of the nation, and an adequate deposit of specie in its vaults, would, it is confidently believed, confer many eminent and continued blessings upon the country. It would furnish an immediate and complete remedy for the existing pecuniary difficulties, which result entirely from the insufficiency and depreciation of our present circulating medium. A well digested project of such an institution, when fully propounded to, and understood by the people, cannot fail to propitiate a very general approbation, and to enlist the national pride of a large majority of our fellow citizens. And an institution having all the elements of usefulness and prosperity in itself, and sustained by the confidence and affections of an enlightened people, can scarcely be supposed capable of degenerating into an instrument of fraud or of oppression; or failing to realize the benefits expected from it. The triple security it would offer to its creditors, is of the highest character, and of the most indubitable responsibility; for it is an approved maxim, that real estate affords the best possible guarantee for the ultimate payment of a debt. The pledge of the nation's faith will give peculiar solemnity and increased confidence to its obligations; and a competent deposit of specie will always be present, or presently attainable, to answer the contingent and occasional demands for that article. It is indeed true, that real estate is not sufficiently commutable or transitive to answer the ordinary and daily purposes of commerce and of exchange. These can be accomplished only by specie itself, or by that active and undoubted credit, of which a known and sufficient deposit of the metals, or something equivalent to them, is the proper basis. It is believed the proposed bank would be amply furnished with that equivalent—and to all necessary extent, with the actual metallic deposit itself. It is evident, that a Bank so constituted, the exclusive property of a stable and popular government, and combining the three guarantees, of land, specie, and the public faith, would not require to retain in its vaults as large a proportion of dormant capital as is acknowledged to be indispensable to the safe conduct of a private institution. An ordinary corporate bank, renders no other security for the redemption of its issues, than the actual corporate capital which is supposed to consist in a given deposit of the precious metals, and the resulting credits. And these, aided by the responsibility of its directors and executive officers, constitute its only claim to public confidence. It is not singular, that a confidence so founded, should be sometimes abused. The avidity for gain of unprincipled private specula-

tors, who often have and will control such banks, will violate and betray the most sacred confidence; and unavoidable circumstances will sometimes produce similar calamities without the supervision of moral guilt. A slight revulsion in the commercial exchanges of the country, or a sudden fluctuation of the markets, is sufficient to create a panic, and induce a *run* upon such a bank; and if the demand for specie is not promptly satisfied, suspicions are awakened; public confidence is lost; and a formal suspension or final disruption ensues. But it is not so with a bank established on the public faith, guaranteed by an ample pledge of rich and fertile lands, and conducted by the fiducial, are frequently elected agents of the whole people.

It would be very practicable for the National Bank of Texas to enter into such arrangements with some known, stable, and trustworthy bank or banks of the United States, (and it may be of Europe) as would secure to it every communicable facility for managing the foreign exchanges of the country, and of imparting to its citizens a cheap, expeditious, and safe, transition of their funds to and from the remotest point of their dealings. Such transactions are familiar to merchants, and it only requires capital, or a plenary confidence which is equivalent, to perfect them, without any costly and laborious transportation of gold and silver. For this purpose, it is plain to the minds of all business men, that a large and continuous capital of specie would not be necessary. To regulate and make uniform the domestic exchanges would be equally facile. The bank would of course be extended by branches, established at every convenient and suitable part of the Republic. Each of these branches would possess the same general confidence, as it would partake of the same guarantees with the mother institution, and the bills issued by one branch, would be redeemable at any other, or at the principal bank at the seat of government.

When the bank shall have fully gone into operation, and developed its satisfactory influences on the pecuniary transactions of the country, from the largest fiscal, to the minutest individual concern, by dispensing a sound circulating medium, which will be always commutable into specie without discount or inconvenience, it is hardly conceivable that any fortuitous combination of events could occasion an extensive demand for the metals. The ordinary current wants of the country would be regularly supplied; and it is not probable that any respectable merchant, or other capitalist, would risk his character either to gratify his spleen or his avarice, by getting up a captious *run* on

sound and solvent bank, which involves the reciprocal relations of citizen and country, and is an object of universal patriotic pride an endearment. That this National Bank being wisely administered, in a spirit of uprightness and impartiality, would draw to itself the lively affections of the people, is not a suggestion of fancy, but of nature. The capital of the institution would belong to the people at large; each one of whom would see and feel himself, a co-operator in the establishment, and an actual, though indefinite stockholder. The profits and avails would be employed plainly and directly for their benefit; and these might reasonably be expected to diminish, and ultimately to abolish the whole tariff of duties, and internal taxation.—Somewhat similar experiments have been tried in other countries, and these desirable results have been effected, or are in fair progress toward realization. Let us then listen to the voice of experience. The State of Pennsylvania many years ago established a State institution, by whose powerful agency, and an equitable appropriation of its dividends, she has greatly lessened the burthens of her internal taxes. Alabama has more recently created a similar Bank, and is rapidly approximating to an entire freedom from the odious and too often impertinent surveillance of the tax-gatherer. The State of Georgia has also, by banking on her surplus treasury, been able to dispense extensive blessings by the furtherance of public institutions of various kinds; and has so conducted her fiscal affairs, through the efficiency and integrity of her public agents, that her Treasury bank continued to redeem its issues with the precious metals, during the late universal suspension of specie payments. The citizens of these States regard with a just and patriotic pride their respective institutions; and I doubt not that when such a Bank as I propose shall be put in successful operation in Texas, the people of this country will hail it with a pleasure which derives some zest from considerations of a laudable self-interest.

It is obvious that the national industry of Texas for ages to come, will be principally devoted to agriculture and commerce. While her staple agricultural products find abundant markets in foreign countries, she will have few inducements to direct her labor into other channels. Her manufactures will be confined to a few articles of primary necessity, while the great mass of her population will receive a rich reward for their labor, in the culture of her generous and untiring soil. In order to render the proposed bank as extensively beneficial as possible, its accommodations to individuals should be so dispensed as to correspond

with their respective wants, and the peculiarity of their employment. The merchant whose capital is usually active, and frequently tangible in the form of money; and who from the nature of his business is peculiarly liable to sudden vicissitudes, does not require his paper to be discounted for a long term of time. His securities would, in general, be personal, by endorsement, and it would be unreasonable to exact from him an hypothecation of real estate; for it is essential to the successful prosecution of his business to avoid the acquisition of property so inconvertible as uncultivated lands. The planter or farmer is very differently situated. His property consists chiefly in lands, slaves, and live stock. His financial operations are more tardy, less fluctuating, and exposed to fewer hazards. His means of payments accrue from his crops, and are realized only once in the year. To him, therefore, a longer period of accommodation would be necessary, and might safely be extended. But this extension of time would also make it proper to require permanent security by mortgages on his real estate; which mortgages might be so regulated by law as to obviate the common objection of their being abused to purposes of oppression and fraud. In its transactions with citizens of other pursuits, the bank would be governed by such prudential considerations, as each particular application would suggest. As one of the primary objects of the institution would be to call forth agricultural efforts in the production of the staple commodities of our country, until which is done, neither commerce nor any other branches of industry can flourish, it might be well to direct and order the dispensation of its facilities to be made in every section of the Republic, in proportion to population. A National Bank should also be made the depository of all public moneys, derived from whatever source, and should such an one as is here proposed be established, a special law should make it the duty of all officers, whether directly of the government, or immediately of the counties, and all receivers of public money, to deposit all moneys due to the Republic, which shall come into their hands, in the bank, or one of its branches, within a given time, under suitable penalties for defalcation. And it should be further provided, that no public money shall be drawn from the Bank or its branches, except by a proper order from the Treasury department.

Next in importance to the judicious and practical organization of such an institution, is the provision which should be made for its wise and equitable administration. This will be effected by selecting its principal officers, and its directory, from

the honest and efficient business men of the country, without reference to their particular callings, or political opinions, in such a manner as will command the confidence of the people. If they be thus chosen, none need fear its faithful management, nor need the most jealous friends of our political institutions be alarmed, at its party influence over the government. In making these appointments, while securing a proper responsibility to the government, and the people, we should keep in view, the necessity of guarding, as far as practicable, the officers of the bank, from that slavish dependence upon popular will, which might affect their integrity, or warp their actions; for it will often happen that the best officers of such an institution, will render themselves obnoxious to popular odium by their firmness in resisting those who would lavish the favors of the bank with an indiscriminate and unsparing hand. This danger probably, cannot be entirely provided against, but one of its greatest safeguards may be found in the division of the whole number of directors into three sections, and requiring one division to go out of office every year, without eligibility to re-election for three years after the expiration of their term of service. By this regulation, independent men will always be found at the board of directors, acquainted with the management of the bank, who may save it alike from the influence of party, and the improper bestowal of accommodation. In making these appointments, my own impression is, that the directors who are to regulate and control the affairs of an institution, thus established upon the funds and credit of the government, should be elected by congress upon the joint ballot of the two houses, for the reasons, that being selected from various portions of the republic, the qualifications and integrity of candidates would be better known to the appointing power, and their official responsibility to the people would be augmented by receiving office from their immediate representatives. But the appointment of the two principal officers in the direct management and operations of the bank, (the president and cashier,) upon whose unbending honesty and business talents, the safety of the institution must greatly depend, should be thrown upon as few persons as possible. When the election of such officers is made by joint ballot from candidates who may present themselves to the representatives of the people, it is needless to disguise the fact, that many influences emanating from the good, as well as the more selfish feelings of the human heart, might direct them in their choice, to the injury, if not utter ruin of the institution for the benefit of which they were acting. Besides, we all know

that individual responsibility is lessened, in proportion to the numbers who are brought to act on a given subject, and in making appointments so vitally important to the safety of an institution in which the whole country will have so deep an interest, it may be well to throw upon the individuals in whom the power of appointment is made to vest, a responsibility in some degree commensurate with the importance of the objects to be secured. It would perhaps be equally dangerous to entrust the power of appointment to a single person; for being single, he would be more obnoxious to corruption. There is then but one alternative between the two modes, and that is a middle as well as safe ground, which will confer the right of nomination upon the president, and leave the power of appointment to the senate. The jealous scrutiny of that body will at all times operate as a powerful and sufficient check upon the abuse of executive power. The subordinate officers, may be chosen by the board of directors or in any other manner which after experience may dictate. It would be superfluous to remark, that a supervisory power of investigating the affairs and controlling the bank, should be retained by the national legislature. The immediate representatives of the people, who are the actual and beneficiary stockholders, should be enabled to restrain all imprudent excesses, or abuses into which the board of directors might be betrayed; and should maintain a vigilant and predominant supervision of all their acts; and essentially control the whole circulating medium of the country. Such a power can be no where so safely lodged as in the hands of a free people.

I have spoken at some length on this subject because I feel strongly impressed with its importance. The control of the circulating medium of the country, is as necessary to its salutary administration, as is that of any other department of its interests. If banking powers be valuable in promoting an equal and safe circulation, then it is obvious that it belongs to the government to direct and superintend the distribution and exercise of those powers. It is a portion, and one of peculiar interest too, of the sovereign authority; and to surrender it into the hands of a few private, and in a political sense, irresponsible individuals, would be as repugnant to the true spirit of our institutions, as to subject the management of the war or navy departments to such partial and unpledged hands. Private corporations, like private individuals, may have interests diverse and incompatible with the nation's, and have as little right to be made the fiducial agents of the government. If it be proper to extend franchises to one class

of our fellow-citizens, comprehending generally but few in number, why may they not be claimed by all; and why throw impediments in the way of any man's participating in them. If a few men may become bankers, and throw their equivocal and precarious paper currency upon the community; why not let every man be a banker, and abandon your circulating medium to the illimitable cupidity of private speculation? The planter, the mechanic and the laborer, are as much entitled to the immunities and privileges of the government, as the speculator, or the money dealer. Let all trades be free. Let all rights be equal. The constitution has so ordained it, and so let us carry it into practice. The fostering hand of legislation should be extended to all classes of society. Each individual of a patriotic people, cherishes, supports and defends the government; and none have a peculiar and exclusive claim to rewards or privileges in the exercise of their industry. If banking be profitable, let that profit enure to the republic. If the people must pay an interest for the use of money to facilitate their legitimate operations, let them bestow their sacrifices, not upon the mercenary, but where it will promote the public welfare, and in the process of time revert to their own advantage.

I therefore solemnly adjure the honorable congress that they will withhold their sanction from all applications for banking privileges; and in nowise permit any private interests to be commingled in the great national institution to which I have invited their consideration.

Ours is the age of mind, brought into active and vigorous utility, as exemplified in the various inventions, improvements, and the general advancement of all the arts of peace and civilization. The pursuits and habits of mankind, as well as the destinies of nations, are undergoing a rapid and essential change by the mastery achieved over the elements, and the subjection of the herculean powers of nature to the purposes of life. Nor have the principles of free government remained stationary amidst this great intellectual progression; for our democratic institutions have spread, and are still extending their humanizing and ennobling influences over distant and benighted people, who have long been the victims of despotic sway, inspiring them with those elevated feelings of equality and justice so essential to the peace and welfare of the world, and which we fondly hope will continue to widen and strengthen with the growth of knowledge, until they shall be so consolidated against hereditary power as to form a strictly American continental policy, as contra distin-

guished from that of European dynasties. We should stand admonished by the spirit of the times, to push forward with becoming energy and zeal, in whatever is connected with the stability and glory of government, and the dignity and happiness of man. Texas is the youngest among the family of nations, and may be justly pronounced the fairest and the freest, inasmuch as she stands unblemished in her conduct, and is unencumbered with the checks and qualifications which neutralize the true principles of liberty. To you, gentlemen, the preservation of her honor, and the promotion of her interests, have been confided by the highest of all human authority, the sovereignty of the people. Let not her example in your hands prove faithless to the prolific era of her creation; but with holy motives and an arm of vigor execute her lofty destinies. Providence has placed her before you a perfect blank, ready to receive the finest or the worst impressions. You may shape her to the noblest purposes, or work her to the most debasing and pernicious ends. You may cherish the high principles of purity and virtue, and by so doing render yourselves the just creditors to your country, and the rich testators of future generations; or you may imbue her with sinister habits, immerse her in corruption, and arrest from her the laurels she has acquired by her chivalry and heroism. How bright the horizon before you? How strong the incentives to virtue, honor, and patriotism! As yet her prairies are unploughed; her forests are unfelled; her mines unexplored; and indeed all her various springs of wealth and industry untouched and undeveloped. Is she not also unstained by corruption; unbenighted by ignorance and superstition; unpolluted by party passions and proscriptive fanaticism; with no prejudices to mislead her; no long established customs to combat; no false steps to retrace, nor pernicious institutions to eradicate? Has she not the confidence of all civilized countries, with a pure and friendly government on the one side, and a feeble enemy on the other? What country then could exhibit so naked and so fine a field for the exertion of genius, art and enterprise—for the aspirations of the good and the policy of the wise? And should we not be proud of the enviable power which Providence has given to us, of forming the character of such a nation; of awaking her slumbering energies, and laying the foundation of those noble institutions which are to give vigor to the mind of her people, and freedom to their action? Let us then, gentlemen, duly appreciate the privileges of our peculiar position—let us not lose the opportunity which God has given us of doing good—but let us love

our country, and looking with a single eye to her glory and greatness—do whatever wisdom and experience may suggest for the spread of knowledge, virtue, and the useful arts ; and for the developement of those vast resources which are slumbering in her mountains, and lying dormant in the germinating power of her soil. In a word, let us sacrifice all narrow-minded selfishness upon the hallowed altar of patriotism, and by an energetic and enlightened discharge of the trusts confided to us, elevate our young Republic into that proud rank which her unrivalled beauty and unbounded wealth entitle her to take among the nations of the earth.

(As yet Texas has been comparatively spared from that crudeness of deportment, and that clash of strife and passion, which too often characterize incipient and frontier countries.— Indeed, under the most trying circumstances, from the dawn of the revolution up to the present period she has maintained a dignity, sobriety, and harmony which might stand as an example to older and longer established governments.) It is to be hoped that she will still continue in the same ennobling course ; and that her citizens will persevere in the practice of that amity and forbearance, which distinguish the brave of all countries, and is so closely associated with the most elevated virtues. But to you, gentlemen, it is unnecessary to appeal in furtherance of refined courtesy, and honest legislation. The influence of passion upon the mind is to destroy deliberation, and unfit the representatives of the people for the prompt and just discharge of those duties which their constituents have a right to demand, and which the situation of the country imperiously requires. At the present session you may expect to be thrown into a trying and highly responsible situation. Questions of the greatest magnitude, vitally affecting the future destiny of the country, will have to undergo investigation and discussion, and these debates assuming a corresponding degree of animation and independence, may precipitate the ardent and unguarded mind into a dangerous zeal and passionate excess, incompatible with the dictates of social order and enlightened policy. I must therefore respectfully urge on your part an abstraction from whatever may have a tendency to produce unnecessary warmth or excitement, as absolutely essential to valuable deliberation, and to the preservation of national character. I need not remind you how the Athenian manner consecrated the councils of Athens, and how strongly it was referred to in the Roman debates. An elevated comity, and reciprocal courtesy in the actions of every branch of

the Government in reference to each other, will more than any other circumstance at the present crisis, redound to the credit of the nation abroad, and secure public and private prosperity at home. Let it be our study then, to preserve our national consistency by showing to the world, that the people who could practice the most exalted clemency and all the high principles of humanity in war, are equally capable of pursuing the path of wisdom, justice and moderation in the administration of their civil affairs.

And now, gentlemen, with the most fervent supplication to the Divine Providence for the safety, purity and prosperity of our infant Republic, and the most cordial aspirations for the success of your councils, as also for your individual welfare, I close this my Constitutional communication with the promise on my part of a free, frank and incessant co-operation with you in whatever may appear conducive to the general good.

MIRABEAU B. LAMAR.

CITY OF HOUSTON, Dec. 21, 1838.